

Safe Child Policy

The Middletown Public Library is committed to providing a welcoming and safe environment for all patrons. Children of all ages are encouraged to use the library; however, the responsibility for their safety and behavior rests solely with their parents, guardians, caregivers, or teachers. Library staff, the Board of Library Trustees, and the Town of Middletown assume no responsibility for children left unattended at the library or on library property.

Supervision and Conduct

An unattended child is any child who is not accompanied by a responsible adult providing supervision and is not behaving appropriately. Like all patrons, children must follow the library's rules for behavior to maintain a safe and comfortable environment. (See "Library Use Policy and Behavior Guidelines.")

Children who disrupt library activities will receive one warning. If disruptive behavior continues and a supervising adult cannot be located in the building or reached by phone, the Middletown Police Department may be contacted to assume responsibility for the child.

Parents, guardians, caregivers, and teachers must not leave young children alone or in the care of older children or teenagers who are unwilling or unable to provide appropriate supervision. Adults supervising young children must remain close enough to provide direct supervision when necessary.

Library Programs and Activities

Children of all ages are encouraged to participate in age-appropriate library programs and activities. Program descriptions will specify the intended age group and any supervision requirements. These may include:

- A supervising adult is required to remain in the program with the child.
- A supervising adult is required to remain in the children's area or the library during the program.
- Programs designed for older children where a supervising adult may leave the premises during the program.

It is the responsibility of the parent, guardian, or caregiver to be aware of and adhere to these supervision guidelines.

Closing Time and Emergencies

If the library is closing - either at its regularly scheduled time or due to an emergency - and a supervising adult cannot be located, the Middletown Police Department will be contacted to take responsibility for the child. Children must be aware of library hours and have a way to contact their parent, guardian, or caregiver in case of an emergency.

The library is not responsible for children outside the building after closing or any other time.

Safety Considerations

As in all public spaces, interactions with strangers are a potential risk. Library staff cannot monitor or prevent children from interacting with or leaving with individuals who are not their designated supervising adult. The library assumes no responsibility for the consequences of parents, guardians, caregivers, or teachers forfeiting their supervisory responsibilities.

By using the library, parents, guardians, and caregivers acknowledge their responsibility for their child's safety and behavior at all times while on library premises.

Approved by the Middletown Board of Library Trustees on February 18th, 2025